Righthandedness and Lefthandedness, with Chapters Treating on the Writing Posture, the Rule of the Road, etc. By George M. Gould, M. D. 1908. J. B. Lippincott Co.

In this book Dr. Gould has collected a number of articles which he had contributed to various journals, and has provided the collection with an introduction. The title will, no doubt, attract readers and purchasers, for some degree of curiosity must be general about what will appear to most people as a mystery. Gould quotes Carlyle as saying that the question of the origin of righthandedness is "not to be settled and not worth asking except as a kind of riddle," and he dissents from Carlyle both as to the importance of the question and as to the possibility of answering it satisfactorily.

The author enumerates nine theories of others and dismisses them with scant courtesy. His own theory is that "righthandedness originates in righteyedness." Movements are performed under ocular control. "Physiologically, therefore, the reason why an infant puts forth the right hand to grasp objects is because the right eye is the one which is nearest perfect visually, anatomically, or optically. . . . Heredity has place in the creation of the more nearly perfect right eye. . . . If the left eye of the infant is the better seeing eye it will grasp at objects with the left hand and become left-handed."

This statement of his theory is preceded on another page by references to the repetition of the phylogeny in the ontogeny, to habits and customs of savage men in warfare and barter. "All that is needed to explain righthandedness in 94 per cent of children is some ancestral savage custom, habit, or necessity, widely prevalent, which inclined to the use of the right hand and eye for one or two exceptionally intellectual tasks. The inheritance of aptitude, the force of custom and the necessity of the struggle for existence would certainly fix the persistence of the peculiar excellence."

In another place we are informed that "heredity has directly nothing whatever to do with the existence of the 94 per cent of righthanded and 6 per cent of lefthanded." If we understand Dr. Gould, he says that although "sign-language, warfare, etc., first originated the habit of righteyedness and so of its resultant, righthandedness, and this necessitated the location of the speech-center in the left half-brain," yet if a certain child's left eye happens to be superior to its right eye it will become lefthanded regardless of the "ancestral savage custom, habit or necessity," which is all that is needed to explain righthandedness in 94 per cent of children. Some testimony is presented relating to the general superiority of the right eye, but what is evidently needed to support the theory of lefthandedness is some facts concerning vision in the lefthanded. This seems to be an instance in which proving the cause of the exception would serve to explain the rule.

Speculation on such subjects readily provokes controversy, but controversy with Dr. Gould, a man terribly in earnest, would bring down much verbal violence on the head of his opponent. Dr. Gould disapproves of endeavors to cultivate ambidexterity and calls those who favor such endeavors "cranks," "sillies," "the most blunderful of stupid persons," and "deserving of more severe punishment than any other of our many criminally insane!" It is perhaps too much to expect him to be calm in the face of a world (or at least a profession) that contemplates with indifference or only more or less curiosity the phenomena of righthandedness and lefthandedness when Dr. Gould tells us they "are the most serious of practical concerns, the source of infinite suffering, of innumerable tragedies and even suicides." One is reminded of Colonel Sellers in "The Gilded Age," who enforces his arguments with statistics on sore eyes in China, when Dr. Gould musters "20,000,000 patients with lateral curvature of the spine," "products of morbid visual function," "begotten by the schools." "In every school room of fifty pupils ten are scoliotics and at least twenty are also suffering from terrible and life-wrecking diseases caused by eye-strain." Whence is help to come in this dire need? "In Germany there is no scientific correction of ametropia. With one splendid exception our American students of the subject have usually adopted the European blunder," etc.

The world is out of joint. Oh, dreadful spite that none will learn from Gould to set it right. A book written by a man of temperament (and of temper), such as Dr. Gould seems to be, is not likely to be a dull one; and whatever fault may be found with the work before us dullness can not fairly be charged against it. L. N.

Genito-Urinary Diseases and Syphilis. By E. G. Ballenger, M. D. Publishers, E. W. Allen & Co., Atlanta, Ga.

As stated in the preface of this book of 276 pages, the author has endeavored "to present fundamental principles, and to enter at the same time, into sufficient detail when considering matter of prime importance." The text is well arranged and the black and white illustrations, with few exceptions, are quite good. The latter are taken mostly from other works—for which due credit is given. The author, in addition to giving personal views based on experience, has also made a close study of recent literature from which he has drawn freely in his effort to bring the little book up to date. His conservatism is shown in his attitude toward bacteriotherapy. The efficacy of bacterins is affirmed and proper emphasis is placed on the fact that they are useful as adjuncts and cannot supplant other means of treatment. The chapter in which the spirochaeta pallida is described, is concise, and the best methods of staining smears are briefly given with three good illustrations showing the organism. It might be said that the book is too brief—but in this age of almost countless exhaustive publications this would be considered a virtue by the busy general practitioner or the harassed student. This work will prove of interest and value to both. H. E. A.

Practical Obstetrics. By Grandin, Jarman and Marx. Fourth edition. F. A. Davis Company.

That four editions should be needed of this work on Obstetrics to meet the demand during the past fourteen years stamps it with approval as far as the general practitioner is concerned. The fact that more accurate, more extensive, more standard text books on obstetrics have been written during this period by more eminent American obstetricians than Grandin, Jarman or Marx, makes one wonder wherein lies the secret of their success.

The scientific foundation of the book is very weak, being entirely lacking in original work, and the ideas expressed, based as they are on the work of other men, are faulty in the extreme and lag far behind the modern point of view.

The book is profusely illustrated and contains many fine photographs of clinical obstetrics. Some could well be omitted, particularly the photographs of Grandin, with his fingers in the rectum of the

patient, "shelling out" the head over the perineum just prior to tying the infant's cord. The book is full of suggestions to the general practitioner which are probably of marked clinical value, but which often had better be taken cum grano salis.

While the book is not one to be recommended to students it can always be read by the practitioner with profit and often with amusement.

A. B. S.

Radiant Light and Heat and Convective Heat. By W. B. Snow. Scientific Authors' Publishing Co., New York.

Dr. Snow states in his preface:

"It has been the writer's purpose in the preparation of this little volume, as far as possible, to make it a practical aid to beginners in an important department of physical therapeutics, in which, if he has succeeded, he will be rewarded for his efforts."

Dr. Snow has undoubtedly succeeded in his purpose; his book is concise, complete and not too technical and, as he states in the preface, suitable for beginners.

His clinical reports are not highly exaggerated, as we often find in books of this character, and the small details of the methods of treatment are particularly well given.

In short, the work is a good epitome of the subject and well worth the perusal of any one interested in this line of work.

D. F.

The Principles of Pathology. By J. George Adami, M. A., M. D., LL. D., F. R. S., Professor of Pathology in McGill University and Pathologist to the Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal; Late Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, England. Volume I: General Pathology. Illustrated. Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia and New York, 1908.

From the publication of Virchow's great work on Cellular Pathology until very recently morphological studies have dominated pathological investigation almost to the exclusion of all other methods. For years pathologists concerned themselves with the discovery of new lesions, and in giving precision to the morphology of old ones; in gathering statistics, exploiting organs of exaggerated size, and in general as Prudden has remarked, celebrating the monstrous and the strange. Fruitful as have been many of these researches the investigator of to-day, however, counts them "as but glimpses on the threshhold of a domain in which his problems demand a recognition of the dominion in his own fields of universal physical and chemical laws, of the doctrine of evolution, and of the potency in single cells and in cell communities of hereditary traits and tendencies." Thus, in the added light of biology, physiology, chemistry, physics, anatomy, and of all the sciences ancillary to medicine the study of morbid processes has assumed to-day a significance impossible with the older methods of approach.

While this broader conception is manifest in much of the recent literature relating to pathology, textbooks on the subject have almost invariably disregarded it, so much so that they are little more than records of more or less crude morphological observations. The time has passed, however, when morbid anatomy and morbid histology may be regarded as the sum and substance of pathological teaching, and when to name the tools is all that is to be demanded of the student. Although a knowledge of structural alterations is essential to a clear comprehension of some of the effects of altered function, in the future greater emphasis will have to be laid on the causes of disease and mechanism by which structural and functional changes are produced as well as upon the biological and physiological significance of the cellular reactions, if we are to impart to the student a knowledge which he can intelligently apply to his later clinical experience.

Noteworthy among those who have taken this position is Professor Adami, the author of the present System of Pathology. In that masterly article on inflammation, which appeared several years ago in Allbutt's System of Medicine, he clearly indicated one of the viewpoints at least from which pathology may and should be presented. With the same philosophical conception he has attempted to present in this first volume the broad principles which underlie not only pathology but physiology as well. It is chiefly in this respect that the present volume differs from its numerous predecessors; instead of a mere account of various lesions, especially from the morphological side, Professor Adami gives in an orderly manner an analysis of the phenomena of disease.

Since the author, like the great master, Virchow, was forced to recognize the cell and the changes undergone by it as the basis of all pathological study he begins his book with a description of the cell from histological, physiological and chemical standpoints. This phase of the subject is very properly dwelt upon at considerable length while the biophoric theory receives adequate recognition in the discussion of inheritance in so far as it bears on pathology. The second section of the work contains a satisfactory, although in some aspects a rather summary account of the cause of disease, while the third and last section deals with Morbid and Reactive Processes, such as Inflammation, Immunization and Immunity, Regeneration, Neoplasms and Regressive Tissue Changes.

In a medical journal of this character it seems scarcely necessary to analyze the work in greater detail. Although some of the views advanced by the author are at least debatable, we have no hesitancy in expressing the opinion that this is the most logical presentation of general pathology which has ever appeared in any language. We suspect, however, that the treatment is somewhat too comprehensive for the average medical student of the present day; but as a work of reference it will unquestionably render signal service.

A. J. L.

The Principles of Bacteriology: A Practical Manual for Students and Physicians. By A. C. Abbott, M. D., Professor of Hygiene and Bacteriology and Director of the laboratory of Hygiene, University of Pennsylvania. Eighth edition. Thoroughly revised.

It has been some little time since the issue of the last edition of this always excellent book. There have been many new steps taken along this part of medicine. The author has taken up the most important and tried of these new advances, and brought his book up to date. He has also eliminated some of that which is of less importance. In this he is right, as this is one of the most important branches of preventive medicine as well as the one most subject to changes due to research and advancement. In other words, he aims straight at the useful and eliminates the others. The book is beautifully arranged, printed and bound.

H. R. O.